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GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

COMMENTARY

THE CHILDREN OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By Judith Lennett

"The child trapped in an abusive environment is faced with formidable tasks of adaptation. She must find a way to preserve a sense of trust in people who are untrustworthy, safety in a situation that is unsafe, control in a situation that is terrifyingly unpredictable, power in a situation of helplessness."¹

With these chilling observations as an introduction, members of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence Children's Working Group recently presented to the Commission a comprehensive report on the impact on children of exposure to domestic violence. The report contained twenty recommendations aimed at intervening in the cycle of violence that leaves thousands of Massachusetts children at serious risk for:

- repetition of the cycle of violence in their adult and parenting relationships
- post traumatic stress disorder
- irreversible psychological damage
- internalization of violence as a way of life
- developmental delays

The authors of the report included providers of services to battered women and their children, clinicians who intervene with children exposed to domestic violence, lawyers who provide representation to battered women and their children, researchers in the field of domestic violence, a representative of the Attorney General's office and the Department of Social Services, and a judge of the probate and family court.

They spent nearly a year studying the findings of researchers and clinicians from across the United States and Canada to determine how childhood exposure to domestic violence affects children. In turn, they developed a cohesive set of policy recommendations that, if implemented, could begin to reverse the deep and enduring harm often suffered by children exposed to family violence. The recommendations reflect not only the thinking of these researchers and clinicians but also reflect the experiences of the Working Group who deal with the children of domestic violence on a daily basis.

The overarching recommendation contained in the report calls for the creation of integrated community networks that respond to the particular needs of the communities in which they are located and which are

"E each child of domestic violence identified quickly and skillfully; each child brought to safety; each child assessed and offered a full range of healing services; and each child exposed not to battering but to non-violent models of human interaction and conflict resolution will be the best mark of our progress."

¹ Judith L. Herman *Trauma and Recovery* New York Basic Books, 1992 p.96

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marked by strong collaboration across agency lines. The recommendations further provide that all integrated community networks **address four key issues:**

- 1) the ability to identify domestic violence as a factor underlying a child's distress;
- 2) a commitment to safety as the highest priority in a community's initial response to domestic violence;
- 3) the provision of high quality and comprehensive intervention services aimed at reversing the damage done by exposure to domestic violence; and
- 4) the need for education and training initiatives for both professionals, so that they can intervene more effectively on behalf of children, and for the children so that they can begin to learn non-violent ways of resolving conflict in their lives.

The twenty specific recommendations are divided along these four areas:

- 1) in the area of identification, recommendations include the funding of the Department of Education so that it can develop and deliver seminars on domestic violence for all education and school personnel;
- 2) in the area of safety, recommendations include a call for the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Executive Office of Communities and Development to review their policies and procedures to ensure that public assistance and housing policies fully meet the safety needs of battered women and their children; a commitment to targeted funding for legal assistance aimed at ensuring the safety of the child and adult victims of violence;
- 3) in the area of intervention, recommendations include that steps be taken to insure that current reimbursement systems support the provision of the full range of psychological services needed to treat children who are harmed by exposure to domestic violence; and
- 4) in the area of education and training, recommendations include support of the piloting of innovative ant-violence and conflict resolution programs throughout Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Commissioner of Probation estimates that well over 40,000 children are exposed to reported incidents of domestic violence each year. Given the extent of this exposure, the depth of harm that children may endure, and the present lack of cohesive state-wide policies

“ The Massachusetts Commissioner of Probation estimates that well over 40,000 children are exposed to reported incidents of domestic violence each year. ”

to address this problem, the Children's Working Group also recommends that pilot projects aimed at creating integrated community networks be funded in one or more places in Massachusetts so that we can learn from direct experience what systems work best. These pilots can serve as models for communities throughout the Commonwealth so that, town by town, and neighborhood by neighborhood, we can begin to respond holistically to the children of domestic violence.

At its meeting of January 24, 1996, the Commission voted to formally endorse all of the report's recommendations. Commission members also suggested several additional recommendations to the Working Group. These will be taken up by the Working Group at its next meeting and will be brought back to the full Commission on March 13, 1996.

Once the report is fully endorsed, the Children's Working Group will lead the long and complex process of implementing its recommendations, a process that could take several years to complete and will require great commitment and determination. The authors acknowledged this challenge in their conclusion observing that “each child of domestic violence identified quickly and skillfully; each child brought to safety; each child assessed and offered a full range of healing services; and each child exposed not to battering but to non-violent models of human interaction and conflict resolution will be the best mark of our progress.”

Judith Lennett is Executive Director of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective and is the Co-Chair of the Transition Subcommittee of the Governor's Domestic Violence Commission and Children's Working Group.

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3:30-4:30 P.M.

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Event.*

*For further information contact Jean Inman at
(508) 583-6117*

Perspective from A Massachusetts Native American

by Ramona Peters

“No Cases of Domestic Violence Found in Massachusetts.” This is a news heading we would all love to read someday. If English were the language written and spoken in Massachusetts back in 1619, this headline could have been truthfully written.

Domestic violence and sexual assaults were behaviors virtually unimaginable by the Eastern Algonquin Nations. These nations one may recognize as Wompanoag, Pequot, Pennacook, Narraganset, Nipmuck, and others. The entire area we call “New England” was inhabited by these Native Nations whose democracy and equality disallowed the concept of assaults directed at women and children.

The historical evidence points toward the matriarchal culture base as being a natural prevention of any such social disease developing amongst these people.

Native American matriarchal governments were advanced beyond European monarchical and aristocratic 17th century domination.

The traditional role of Eastern Native American women played a major part in the entire governmental systems formerly practiced here. It was, in fact, the Clan Mothers who selected and installed the Sachems (governors) and Sagamores (mayors), governed tracts of land, and were also Sachems themselves. They chose the male role models for each town and carried the lineage down through the women’s line. Every person belonged to his mother’s clan, the father being in the nations of eastern North America a “merely tolerated guest”¹ subject to ejection at any time, but sometimes acting as a representative for his wife and children. The raising of children was supervised by the Clan Mothers and the parents were considered administrative officers for that purpose. Large extended families lived together in huge long houses, and the isolation of any person was slim. Violence in any family could not have been hidden, much less tolerated. The men taught and nurtured children of their clan; in other words, all the children were their students. The clan system was a carefully worked-out balance of jurisdiction between smaller and larger units, which prepared the civics of intricate and complex federations.

What do these points of information have to do with domestic violence, you may ask? While looking at the origins of social disease, we inevitably find cultural and governmental causes

and cures. If one were to research Early Colonialism and its laws, one would find white women and children being convicted and hung for such simple “crimes” of insolence and disobedience. Public beatings or floggings of children and women were common forms of entertainment in the towns of Massachusetts, the English “rule of thumb” common law prevailing. It eventually took child labor laws to lift the yoke of many of these awful abusive practices toward the young. Wompanoags have helplessly witnessed these abuses against white women and children for 375 years. As stated before, these practices were in direct contrast to Native American cultural norms. These may be difficult

words to hear, but this has been our historical experience. Speaking as a citizen of Massachusetts and an American, I feel optimistic yet frustrated by the patience it requires to address the issues of dominance and control through violence, which is so evident in American society as a whole.

Unfortunately, particularly since the 1950’s, as acculturation continued, cases of domestic violence and child abuse within tribal communities became an obvious problem.

The various societal causes of the violence such as drug abuse and economic oppression are the same in our communities as in larger communities as a whole. It is interesting to

note also that with the disappearance of extended families living in long houses (they

were outlawed by the government in the 18th century) the chances of women being isolated from family, and potential violence being hidden, became possible. Consequently, as a result of these cultural changes, we are only getting started in the educational stages of prevention. For example, on Cape Cod, the Wompanoag Women’s Medicine Society has full support from The Mashpee Wompanoag Indian Tribal Council to begin implementation of domestic violence prevention programming. In addition, we look forward to working with public and private agencies and other Native Nations in Massachusetts to address this serious social ill which is now affecting traditional culture.



¹ The Tribes and the States, William James Sidis circa 1930

Ramona Peters is an internationally known artist and illustrator. She also is a Massachusetts historian of Native American culture and was recently featured in the publicly acclaimed A & E production “500 Nations” and the book of the same name.

Fiscal Year 1997 Domestic Violence Proposed State Funding

Each year, one of the highest priorities of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence is to make budget recommendations which reflect the inter-disciplinary intervention and prevention priorities of the Commission. The FY97 House 1 reflects these priorities with approximately \$20 million of domestic violence appropriations, a \$5,800,000 increase over FY96.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES: In FY95, battered women's programs served an estimated 35,000 women outside of shelter. Extrapolating from this data, the battered women's service community could serve as many as 50,000 at-risk children of these women, if they had sufficient resources. In addition, over 3,000 children were sheltered with their mothers that year. Battered women's programs need additional staff if they are to be able to respond more completely to the children of domestic violence. Therefore, no less than \$1,341,250 has been earmarked for the expansion of services to children, which will insure at least one full time children's advocate in each of the thirty five battered women's programs currently under contract with the Department of Social Services.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE SERVICES: Teen dating violence is a problem whose scope we are just beginning to comprehend. Last year, at the Commission's recommendation, the state budget funded the Department of Education to pilot thirty school-based teen dating violence prevention and intervention programs for victims and perpetrators. The response of local school programs to this initiative was overwhelming. This year's House 1 proposes \$300,000 to continue and expand these pilots. It is the

Commission's intention to document the effectiveness of these pilots, with the goal of making teen dating violence prevention part of the core curriculum of schools across the commonwealth.

Prevention initiatives inevitably result in the need for more supportive services. The budget has earmarked \$978,750 for the expansion of services to teen victims, which will insure that each battered women's program has at least one staff person to work in collaboration with their local schools.

NON-ENGLISH SERVICES: Although battered women's programs have made a commitment to recruiting staff whose culture and language reflect the diversity of women in their community, these efforts have not been able to keep pace with the rate of increase in requests for help particularly among Asian, Haitian, Latino and Portuguese women and their children. House 1 earmarks \$800,000 to increase the availability of services to cultural and linguistic minority battered women.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES BATTERED WOMEN'S SPECIALISTS: It is estimated that in between 48 -75% of cases where children are abused or neglected, the mother is also being abused. In many if not most of these cases, the best way to protect the children is to help the mother protect herself. The DSS Domestic Violence Unit provides training and case consultation to social workers across the state, and acts as liaisons with the local law enforcement, criminal justice systems and other community based services.

The DSS D.V. Unit, for which House 1 recommends \$555,700, also does program development with, and oversees the contracts of, the network of battered women' service providers which are currently funded at \$9,699,000.

VISITATION CENTERS: Often in domestic violence situations, when the

victim leaves, the abuse escalates and the offender uses visitation with the children as an opportunity to continue the abuse. Visitation centers provide a safe and neutral location for dropping off children so the parents do not interact. If there are concerns for the child's safety as well, the offender can be court mandated to visit with his children on site, under staff supervision. The \$300,000 in House 1 will allow DSS to contract for Visitation Center Services in each of their six regions.

SAFEPLAN (CIVIL COURT ADVOCACY PROGRAM): Approximately 50,000 victims seek civil protective orders from our district and probate courts each year. Research shows that victims are at greatest risk when they attempt to leave their abusers. It is the goal of the Commission to eventually place Safeplan advocates in each court who will provide early intervention to victims and help them appropriately utilize the courts, police and community resources to insure their own safety. A Safeplan pilot was instituted in Hamden County in 1995, and is proving very effective. House 1 recommends \$998,120 to expand the pilot to six additional district courts, and to all the probate courts in the Commonwealth.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROSECUTION UNITS: According to the database compiled by the Office of the Commissioner of Probation, 15% of protective orders are criminally violated each year. In addition, police are instructed that arrest is the preferred response if they have probable cause to believe that a domestic crime has occurred, even if a protective order is not in place. House 1 recommends \$3,422,410 to fund specially trained prosecutors and victim/witness advocates to handle the ever increasing volume of complicated and dangerous domestic violence criminal cases, to insure that batterers are held accountable for their crimes and that victim safety issues are

properly addressed in the context of criminal prosecution.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Many victims of domestic violence have complex legal needs beyond restraining orders and criminal prosecution. Lack of necessary legal assistance around the issues of divorce, custody/visitation, child support, income maintenance, DSS involvement, health coverage, housing, immigration, etc. can compromise a victim's safety. House 1 recommends \$1,132,000 for this program which will assist victims and their children in leaving batterers safely with their finances and housing secure.

BATTERER INTERVENTION: The Abuse Prevention Act was amended in 1990 to require the development of guidelines for Batterer Intervention Programs, and advised that judges should refer restraining order defendants, and order convicted perpetrators, into such programs. These programs currently receive no state funding. House 1 recommends \$300,000 to increase program's ability to serve indigent batterers.

LETHALITY RESEARCH, DEATH REVIEW FEASIBIL-

ITY RESEARCH: In 1995, 54 deaths in Massachusetts were attributed to domestic violence. It is crucial that we better understand the circumstances which lead to domestic homicide and homicide/suicide. In addition, Commission members have been interested in establishing Death Review Teams, but are mindful of the difficulties which such reviews could entail in regard to successful prosecution. Therefore, a feasibility study was recommended to clarify both the benefits and difficulties of performing family violence death reviews, and to facilitate future discussions with respect to the establishment and maintenance of a death review mechanism. House 1 allocates \$75,000 to the Executive Office of Public Safety to contract for matching funds with a private researcher/research institution for these purposes.

This article was excerpted from recommendations submitted by the Subcommittees of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. Domestic violence funding was proposed by Governor Weld and Lieutenant Governor Cellucci for Fiscal Year 1997.

Violence Against Women Act (V.A.W.A.) Update

The Violence Against Women Act (V.A.W.A.) was enacted as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. In June 1995, the U.S. Department of Justice notified states of the availability of V.A.W.A. criminal justice grant funds (V.A.W.A./S.T.O.P. Program) for law enforcement, prosecution, court and victims programs. In response, during the summer of 1995, the Executive Office of Public Safety convened a V.A.W.A. Advisory Group to help formulate a statewide strategy for expenditure of these fiscal year 1995 V.A.W.A. criminal justice funds. The Advisory Group was made up of professionals and advocates from law enforcement, prosecution, the courts and non-profit victim agencies.

In October 1995, the Massachusetts statewide strategy was submitted to the V.A.W.A. office and was approved by the Justice Department in early November 1995. Grant RFP's were made available in November to both public and private agencies in Massachusetts and fifteen awards were made in January 1996.

At a ceremony at the State House on January 4, 1996 Lt. Governor A. Paul

Cellucci and Secretary of Public Safety Kathleen M. O'Toole announced the award of \$380,000 in grants. "The Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence has begun to set the standards for investigation and punishment that our system desperately needs," Cellucci said. "These grants will help all of us continue that work and enable communities and the state to expand existing domestic violence programs."

Funds were awarded to:

- 1) seven district attorneys and the Attorney General's Office,
- 2) a number of non-profit organization programs in support of victims,
- 3) The Criminal History Systems Board for a law enforcement data collection initiative to provide better information on the extent of domestic violence
- 4) courts, probation and parole in support of various programs designed to aid victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The \$26 million in funds provided nationally in fiscal year 1995 for the V.A.W.A. /S.T.O.P. Program was intended

to be a down payment on a six year initiative to help states to build comprehensive criminal justice programs. Currently fifty-six plans by state and territories have been approved. Although there are \$174.5 million in funds authorized for V.A.W.A./S.T.O.P. Program and \$65 million for V.A.W.A. Health and Human Services programs for fiscal year 1996, these funds have not yet been appropriated. Calls to Congressional Representatives and Senators in support of full funding for the 1996 V.A.W.A. funds could aid Massachusetts efforts to combat this critical public safety issue.

For further information on the V.A.W.A. program, contact the Executive Office of Public Safety V.A.W.A. Program Director, Rai Kowal, at (617) 727-6300 ext. 305.

1995 Domestic Violence Homicides

IN MEMORIAM

JANUARY

- Jan. 9: **Margaret Locckley**, 68, of Chelsea. Allegedly shot by her ex-husband, James Rossi, 78.
- Jan. 11: **Sandra Caulfield**, 33, of Stoughton. Allegedly shot by her husband, Norwood policeman William Caulfield, 38, who then shot himself.
- Jan. 11: **Meredith Coppola**, 18, of North Andover. Stabbed to death, allegedly by boyfriend John McIntyre, 23.
- Jan. 17: **Mireille Jacques**, 38, of Mattapan. Stabbed to death, allegedly by her estranged husband, George Jacques, 38.
- Jan. 24: **Claire Downing**, 60, of Cambridge. Beaten to death in her wheelchair with a blunt instrument, allegedly by her husband, Kenneth Downing, 62, who then attempted to commit suicide.
- Jan. 26: **Sharon Gilliam**, 29, of Dorchester. Shot to death, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend, Michael Lodge, 41.

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 5: **Nydia Vegilla Vega**, 37, of Lawrence. Stabbed to death in her apartment, allegedly by her estranged husband, Edwin Rodriguez, 47.
- Feb. 12: **Richard Stuart**, 25, of Lynn, and **Nelson DeOliveira**, 23, of Medford, shot and killed. **Rhonda Stuart**, 23. Wounded in the chest, allegedly by Rhonda's ex-boyfriend, Stephen Grunning, 28. Richard Strut was Rhonda's brother and DeOliveira her new boyfriend.
- Feb. 15: **Claire DeFosse**, 53, of Spencer, and her attorney, **Joseph Fortier**, 41, of Charlton. Shot to death during a divorce meeting, allegedly by DeFosse's estranged husband, Ernest Don DeFosse, 62, who then killed himself.
- Feb. 16: **Daisy Aviles**, 26, of Framingham. Shot at least four times and killed, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend, Samuel Sarante, 27, who then hanged himself.
- Janefa Simmons**, 28, of Lynn. Stabbed to death and left in her apartment for five days until her live-in boyfriend, Osa Omoregie, 36, confessed to police.

MARCH

- March 2: **Esther Ruddock**, 67, of Chatham. Slashed across the neck and killed, allegedly by her son, Robert Darren Ruddock, 37, who had a history of mental illness.
- March 5: **Janet Lynch**, 43, of Brighton. Fatally beaten, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend, Phillip Sales, 33.
- March 10: **Dawne Mimms**, 22, of Roxbury. Shot to death, allegedly by her ex-boyfriend, Andre Norman, 25, who then committed suicide.
- March 18: **Elizabeth Snell**, 52, of Marstons Mills. Suffocated to death, allegedly by her husband, Emory Snell, 41, who reportedly had a long history of abusive behavior.
- March 26: **Teresa Cardona**, 52, and her husband, **Juan Jardona**, 54, found stabbed to death in their South End apartment. Investigators suspect murder-suicide.

APRIL

- April 21: **Nancy Wilson**, 33, of Dorchester. Found dead in a car trunk after being struck by a blunt instrument. Wilson's roommate and possible lover, Stephen Emmons, 36, was arrested in connection with the case.
- April 27: **Keith Gaines**, 36, of Dorchester. Stabbed to death, allegedly by his girlfriend, Zingy Gamble, 30.

MAY

- May 7: **Judith Machado**, 32, of New Bedford. Stabbed to death by boyfriend Corey Peters, 25, who turned himself in.
- May 12: **Lydia Saez**, 43, of Springfield. Stabbed in the heart, allegedly by her boyfriend, Geraldo Lopez, 33.
- May 27: **Minerva Moya**, 46, of Lawrence. Shot to death, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend, Luis Arias a.k.a. Jose Amaro, 42.

JUNE

- June 3: **Janice May**, 37, of Swampscott. Strangled, allegedly by live-in boyfriend Joseph LeClair, 31.

AUGUST

- Aug. 3: **Andrea Holly Thompson**, 26, of West Springfield. Stabbed to death, allegedly by her estranged husband, Charles

- Thompson, 32.
- Aug. 18 **Kimberly Vantre**, 25, of North Brookfield. Shot and killed, allegedly by live-in boyfriend Michael Moriarty, 46, as she attempted to move out of their shared apartment. Moriarty then killed himself.
- Aug. 22: **Laura Argeorgitis**, 17, of Swampscott. Shot in the face and chest, allegedly by her best friend's boyfriend, Amilcar De La Cruz, 16.
- Aug. 28: **Laura Rosenthal**, 34, of Framingham. Beaten to death, allegedly by her husband, Richard Rosenthal, 40, who then impaled Laura's heart and lungs on a stake in the yard.

SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 3: **Shirley Sirois**, 31, of Holden. Shot to death, allegedly by her husband, Brian Sirois, 34.
- Sept. 8: **Joanne Roy**, 32, of Lowell. Killed by shotgun, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend and reported long-time abuser, Brian Murphy, 34, who then killed himself.
- Sept. 9: **Leo (Bubba) Boisjolie 3d**, 28, of Spencer. Stabbed and killed. Allegedly by his sister's boyfriend, Ronald Papierski, 23.
- Sept. 20: **Vera Young**, 19, of Dorchester. Stabbed to death, allegedly by Ervin Johnson, 36, ex-boyfriend and father of her 5 year old child.
- Sept. 22: **Cheryl Wilson**, 34, of Hyannis. Shot to death, allegedly by Curtis Wilson, 42, her estranged husband and a Brockton police officer. He then killed himself.
- Sept. 27: **Nilor Macedo**, 43, of New Bedford. Knifed to death, allegedly by his girlfriend, Mariam Doval, 37.

OCTOBER

- Oct. 3: **Stella Grondin**, 24, of Somerville. Strangled, allegedly by Brian Polly, 41, her boyfriend.
- Oct. 15: **Marie Navarro**, 26, of Greenfield. Stabbed to death, allegedly by intermittent boyfriend Walden Mejias, 24.
- Oct. 15: **Michael Barg**, 39, of Lynn. Hacked to death by samurai sword, allegedly by Gerard Casey Jr., 53, ex-boyfriend of Barg's roommate and possible lover.
- Oct. 22: **Richard Reed**, 35, of Dorchester. Stabbed to death, allegedly by his live-in girlfriend, Jacqueline Gethers, 50.

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 3: **Paula Burke**, 41, of Lynn. Shot and killed, allegedly by her husband, John Burke, 46.
- Nov. 13-17: **Virak Men**, 12, **Visal Men**, 11, **Sovanna Men**, 9, of Lowell from gunshot and machete wounds after a Nov. 12 attack, allegedly by Vuthy Seng, 34, an ex-boyfriend of the children's mother.
- Nov. 29: **Marie Yvette Joujoute**, 38, of Somerville. Shot to death, allegedly by her husband, Louis Laurore, 43.
- Nov. 30: **William Kahn**, 48, of Littleton. Shot to death, allegedly by John Lin, 25, of Wellesley. Ex-husband of one of attorney's Kahn's clients. Lin then killed himself.

DECEMBER

- Dec. 17: **Brenda Andrews**, 42, of Roxbury. Strangled, allegedly by her live-in boyfriend, Keith Dunn, 32.



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FORUM is a periodical of the Executive Office of Public Safety, Programs Division, published in collaboration with the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence.

Its purpose is to provide a forum for discussion and serve as a clearinghouse for information on the issues addressing the declared public emergency of domestic violence. We welcome your comments and story contributions to **FORUM**.

The views and opinions expressed in FORUM are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1996

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GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

COMMENTARY

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COLLECTION

Dating Violence Among Adolescent Batterers:

A Profile of Restraining Order Defendants in Massachusetts

by Sandra L. Adams, Nancy E. Isaac, Donald Cochran
& Marjorie E. Brown

On September 8, 1992, the Massachusetts Commissioner of Probation under the direction of the Chief Justice for Administration and Management and in cooperation with the Secretary of Public Safety implemented the Registry of Civil Restraining Orders (the "Registry"), the nation's first legislatively mandated state-wide, centrally computerized, domestic violence record keeping system. The Registry was created in response to the need for a centralized database accessible by judicial and law enforcement agencies for the tracking and enforcement of domestic violence restraining orders (ROs). The Registry database contains information regarding the specific conditions of each RO, the age and gender of each batterer, and any history of court arraignments for delinquent and criminal behavior that any defendant may have. Data is entered into the Registry on the same day that the order is issued by any one of Massachusetts' 97 district, superior, and probate courts. Approximately 50,000 RO cases were entered into the Registry in 1993.

While this database was created primarily to increase the responsiveness of the criminal justice system, it also constitutes a new research tool that already has been used to profile a large sample of men involved in domestic violence. N.E. Isaac, D. Cochran, M.E. Brown & S.L. Adams, "Men Who Batter: A Profile of a Restraining Order Database", 3 *Archives of Family Medicine* 50 (1994).

Heightened interest in both youth violence and domestic violence in recent years has also led to an increase in attention to the subset of interpersonal violence occurring at the juncture of these two topics—teenage dating and courtship violence. Registry data provides a good resource for dating violence research because, Massachusetts, unlike many states, makes ROs available to individuals in substantive dating relationships (whether cohabiting or not), as well as to individuals under the age of 18. Therefore, we studied Registry data to gain insight into incidents of interpersonal violence among adolescents. (See statistics box on the next page)..... As these cases likely represent the "tip of the iceberg," the data highlight the need for early intervention and programmatic responses tailored specifically to young individuals.

What This Study Implies

The considerable number of young teen dating violence cases seen in the Registry during just a 10 month period is disconcerting, given that they probably represent a very small portion of all dating violence incidents. It is likely that many teens are unaware of their right to obtain a restraining order, and the process of bringing a RO case before the court is probably even more daunting to an adolescent than to

"As these cases likely represent the 'tip of the iceberg,' the data highlight the need for early intervention and programmatic responses tailored specifically to young individuals."

an adult. The data presented in this study clarifies the potential seriousness of intimate violence among young people.

The fact that such a high proportion of the young teen defendants already have prior delinquent and criminal records indicated that teen dating violence coming to the attention of the courts may be a part of a general pattern of violent and criminal behavior established at a very early age. This fact, coupled with the high incidence of actual physical assault, should motivate respondents in many sectors (e.g. police, educators, physicians, social workers) to take these cases seriously.

The high recidivism rates (1 in every 5 for the first 6 months), especially among defendants with prior offenses, indicate the need to further enhance the protection of victims, perhaps by providing safety planning to all RO plaintiffs. Given the young age of the defendants, the data also highlight the need for primary prevention efforts to begin at a very young age. Age appropriate, violence prevention and education needs to begin as early as the elementary school years to help divert the onset of patterns of abusive and violent behavior.

For those who are already involved in teen dating violence, a greater number of tertiary prevention programs need to be structured specifically for young offenders and victims. Reaching perpetrators at the earliest possible age may increase the chances for long term behavioral change. In the absence of such intervention, it seems inevitable that these same individuals will continue to show up in the Registry as adults.

Also of great concern is the number of teen dating violence cases where the defendant and plaintiff already have children in common. At least one-third of cases in this sample involved children, and the actual prevalence of children may be higher since a custody surrender may not have been ordered in all instances. The presence of yet another generation being exposed to violence and coercion as a model for interpersonal interaction is a good reason for intervening with these cases as early and vigorously as possible. Intervention programs exist to assist children of battered women. See especially Einat Peled & Diane Davis' book, *Groupwork With Children of Battered Women: A Practitioner's Manual* (Sage, 1995), and Einat Peled, Peter Jaffe & Jeffrey Edleson's book, *Ending the Cycle of Violence: Community Responses to Children of Battered Women* (Sage, 1995).

Further study of very young individuals who are abusive toward intimate partners may provide insights relevant to the prevention of both teen and adult intimate violence. An additional benefit of treatment programs for the youngest offenders would be the opportunity for more in-depth study of these individuals' psychology, background and behaviors.

Donald Cochran, EdD is the Commissioner of Probation for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where Sandra L. Adams, MPA and Marjorie E. Brown, MS also work. Nancy E. Isaac, ScD is at the Injury Control Center at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Restraining Order Registry Data

Sept. 1992 - June 1993

Sample = 757 Adolescent Defendants

- While the majority (87%) of the young teenage batterers involved in dating violence were 16 and 17 years of age, some of the teenagers (0.8%) were as young as 13 years old.
- Boys made up the majority of the adolescent batterers (80.8%), however, almost one-fifth of the orders were taken out by boys against girls.
- Almost 13% of the restraining orders issued against teen batterers were requested by the victim's parents on behalf of their children's welfare.
- Despite their young age, over half of the defendants had amassed a history of violent delinquent and criminal behavior. Fifty-seven percent of the defendants had prior delinquent or criminal arraignments for a violent offense, and 19.8% had a prior arraignment for violation of a restraining order.
- Information collected from affidavits indicated that 73.4 % of the victims report some type of abusive physical contact. Incidents of physical abuse include kicking, slapping, biting, choking, punching, and other types of assault.
- In 17% of the affidavits, the use of a weapon (other than a body part, e.g. fist, shod foot) was noted. Of those cases mentioning the use of a weapon, the weapon used most frequently was a knife or a similar sharp instrument.
- Another variable for which information was extrapolated from the affidavits was the incident which the victim mentioned as preceding the onset of the most recent abuse. In only one-quarter of the affidavits was this variable distinguishable. The most common incident was the recent break-up of a relationship between the victim and the defendant (47.8%) or a refusal by the victim to talk with or date the defendant (10.9%).

*An Open Letter
to Assistant District Attorney
Sarah M. Buel*



Sarah M. Buel

Dear Sarah:

Well, I guess it was bound to happen sooner or later. You're leaving Massachusetts for a sunnier clime and warmer winters. Texas' gain is Massachusetts' great loss! How fortunate for domestic violence victims in Texas to have you as their "local" advocate.

When you first told me that you'd be leaving soon, I felt a rush of sadness followed by many poignant memories. The public persona and public memories are well known - the speaking voice and fact - filled speeches, the numerous articles, protocols, curriculums and training manuals, so too the awards from legislators, law enforcement, prosecutors, victims and the President himself.

However, the memories I most recall are those that many are not fortunate to share. Such as the first time you presented to the Governor's Anti-Crime Council over 10 years ago. All who heard you wondered "Who is this woman and what is she so riled up about?" After all, domestic violence at that time was just a private family affair, wasn't it? You soon convinced the criminal justice professionals that this was a crime that needed to be dealt with seriously. Or the time you told me that you had 4 speaking engagements in 4 states over a 3 day period and you didn't know how you were going to make it through, but it was important that as many people heard your message as possible. What about the stories of victims from all over the U.S. you have personally helped in addition to your job as assistant district attorney? Your voicemail message at home that pleads with people to be patient with return calls because you're fielding 30-40 a day?

A more personal attribute that truly stands out, and for which I admire you greatly, is your stated faith in God and dedication and commitment to doing, as you say, "His work". We don't hear that often in "politically correct" circles today. However, you're in good company; our forefathers stated it quite often. Also, remember you told me once a long time ago that you prayed if you ever made it to Harvard Law you'd dedicate your life to victims? Well, you did it, graduating CUM LAUDE, while still raising a son by yourself and working too. KUDOS.

There are many examples, unfortunately, in government today of self-serving and ego driven agendas. You, however, are truly a sincere and dedicated selfless public servant. Your example has served to remind us of the Founders' dream - to promote the pursuit of happiness and liberty for all, not only in the country as a whole, but in our individual homes as well. I know all our colleagues in government, academia, the private sector and victims groups join me in saying a heart-felt THANK YOU for your caring and dedication. WE SHALL MISS YOU. Good luck, God speed and "thanks for the memories...."

With great affection and respect,

Rai

Rai Kowal is the Director of the Violence Against Women Program for the Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division and the Managing Editor of Forum.

F.Y.I.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Third Annual Statewide
Domestic Violence
Prosecutors & Advocates Conference
Oct. 3rd & 4th, 1996
Seacrest Hotel, Falmouth, MA
Contact: Beth Merachnik 617-629-0222**

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 1996

The First Massachusetts Conference on Women

Bringing Beijing Home- Simmons College

For more information, contact Margo Melnicove at the Women's Institute for Leadership and Change at (617) 450-7921. All Massachusetts women and girls are invited to attend! Business, government, academic professionals, clergy, ...students, aunts and mothers.....! We want to hear from you!

**Annual National College
of District Attorneys
Domestic Violence and Child Abuse
Conference
Atlanta, Georgia October 13-16, 1996
Contact 1-713- 743-1844**

**6th International Conference on
Sexual Assault & Harassment
on Campus
Nov 1-4, 1996 Long Beach, California**

Sponsored by the Safe Schools Coalition, Inc.
1-800-537-4903

Legislative Update

The **GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION SUBCOMMITTEE** is currently working to advance several bills that have been identified as priorities for the Commission:

Legislation providing **PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN IN CUSTODY** and **VISITATION** hearings has passed the House and been forwarded to the Senate. This bill allows judges to consider evidence of a pattern of abuse as a factor contrary to the best interests of the child, and creates a rebuttable presumption against allowing the abusive parent custody or visitation. The existence of a restraining order alone would not be sufficient evidence to have custody /visitation denied.

The **AGGRAVATED ASSAULT BILL** supported by the Commission has passed the House and is on the Senate Calendar. This bill increases to 100 years the penalty for assault which; a) causes serious bodily harm; b) is of a woman known to be pregnant; and c) is against a person who has a restraining or other non-contact order sworn out against the perpetrator.

A **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PACKAGE BILL** combining several important proposals is in the Judiciary Committee. Senator Hicks and Caroline Keshian from the Attorney General's Office met with the Committee Chairman to discuss the bill and ask that it be favorably reported. The bill broadens the definition of stalking, increases access to the 209A process and provides for mandatory arrest when police believe a batterer is in possession of guns or permits and is failing to surrender them upon request.

Law Enforcement

Domestic Violence Statistics and NIBRS

by Rhiana Kohl, Ph.D.

Statistical information about the prevalence and dynamics of family and intimate violence has many purposes. Such data is useful in raising awareness, demonstrating the need for resources, guiding problem-solving strategies, and influencing policy decisions. Since domestic violence covers various issues and infiltrates many aspects of society, sources of data can vary and are not always easily accessible.

NIBRS is a growing resource of essential information in this area. But, what is NIBRS exactly? NIBRS is the *National Incident Based Reporting System*. It is a relatively new system of collecting and reporting crime scene data by law enforcement agencies that is replacing the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). The Executive Board of Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association voted unanimously in October, 1989 to support using NIBRS. Over 78 law enforcement agencies in Massachusetts are currently reporting NIBRS. These agencies represent a population of over one million or 20% of the Commonwealth. At least 75 additional departments are expected to provide NIBRS this year.

Incident Based Reporting

There are many advantages to NIBRS data. NIBRS is an automated system; therefore, all data is already computerized and accessible in a database. NIBRS data is also incident-based, a major improvement over the UCR. This means that information specific to an **individual** case is collected and available. Details about the incident include the nature of the relationship between offender(s) and victim(s), their ages, race, and gender, and the date, time and location of the offense.

This level of information was NOT available through summary based UCR data and is critical to domestic violence cases. For example, information on victim/offender relationships and the age of both the offender(s) and victim(s) greatly enhance our understanding of the problem. Furthermore, NIBRS data can be a useful tool in crime analysis and developing law enforcement strategies both locally and statewide.

NIBRS Links to Other Databases

In Massachusetts, NIBRS data is being electronically linked with the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) records to access the only existing automated form of detailed crime data. This will enhance computerized checks necessary to implement the Violence Against Women Act, the Child Protection Act, the Brady Bill and many existing state and federal laws. These laws require pre-gun sale and/or pre-employment checks for individuals with specific prior convictions, often involving crimes against women, children, the elderly, and the disabled. In other words, until the NIBRS data is interfaced with CCH, one can only complete a computerized

search identifying someone who has been convicted of a certain crime, with no information presented about the victim.

Massachusetts law enforcement agencies submit NIBRS data to the Crime Reporting Unit (CRU) at the State Police. The CRU and the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) at the Executive Office of Public Safety have been collaborating to increase the implementation of NIBRS, increase the availability and usefulness of data collected, and identify and improve other uses of the data, such as its operational utility for crime analysis and law enforcement. Both the CRU (508-820-2111) and the SAC (617-727-6300, ext. 317) welcome your inquiries.

Rhiana Kohl, Ph.D. is the Director of Research and Development for the Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division.

FACTS & FIGURES

FYI:

The National Crime Victimization Survey (1992 and 1993), recently redesigned to improve the collection of data on violence against women, reported that:

- Women were about 6 times more likely than men to experience violence committed by an intimate;
- Females victimized by an intimate were more often injured by the violence than females victimized by a stranger; and
- Acquaintances of female victims committed over half of the rapes or sexual assaults; intimates committed over 26 percent of these crimes. Strangers were responsible for about one in five.

It is the goal of FORUM to both identify sources of information and provide updated statistics on family and intimate violence. Topics for future editions include an overview of the National Crime Victimization Survey and a general description of LEAPS and CJIS, computerized law enforcement systems, to name a few. If you can identify relevant information to contribute for future editions and/or are in need of specific data, please call 617-727-6300 and contact the FORUM Editor, Rai Kowal at extension 305 or the Director of Research and Development, Rhiana Kohl at extension 317.

Annual Victim Rights Conference Held in State House

by Marilee Kenney Hunt

On April 23, 1996, the State House was the scene of the largest ever Massachusetts Victim Rights Conference. The conference, presented by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA), Victim Witness Assistance Board, and the Attorney General's Office drew over 800 registrants.

At the Plenary session held in Gardner Auditorium and broadcast on closed circuit television to an overflow crowd in the Great Hall, Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, Chair of the Victim and Witness Assistance Board, greeted the large crowd and welcomed them to an exciting day of workshops and networking. Awards were given by Victim and Witness Assistance Board members to the following:

- Victim Witness Advocates who have

completed 10 years of service;

- Rep. James Brett and Sen. Robert Antonioni for their outstanding support of legislation to enhance rights and improve conditions for victims in Massachusetts;

- Carole Sousa for her public policy work in Teen Dating Violence;

- Patricia Smith, a columnist for the Boston Globe for her coverage of and sensitivity to victim issues;

- Clementina and Joseph Chery for their creation of the Peace Curriculum, a reading and writing school curriculum which focuses on peaceful resolutions to difficult problems, in memory of their son Louis D. Brown.

The Plenary Session concluded with an address by Lieutenant Governor Paul Cellucci, Chair of the Governor's

Commission on Domestic Violence. Five concurrent workshops were held. The workshop topics were: Child Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence, Hate Crimes Awareness and Intervention, Juveniles and the Justice System, and Preventing Teen Dating Violence.

One final workshop was conducted in Gardner Auditorium. That workshop was entitled Crime Victims and the Media and featured several prominent Boston media figures - Patricia Smith of the *Boston Globe*, Peter Gelzinis of the *Boston Herald*, Mark Wile, a freelance producer and reporter who for WBZ, and victims whose cases have received considerable media attention.

Marilee Kenney Hunt is the Domestic Violence Program Coordinator for MOVA.

International Women's Day Celebration, March 8, 1996

Massachusetts State House, Nurses Hall

Excerpts from a speech by Dessima M. Williams, Ph. D.

Greetings, everyone, and HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY!

The Fourth World Conference on Women was called to review the status of women worldwide and to generate consensus on actions for the future. This meeting occurred during the year the United Nations celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary. Over 50,000 women, young girls and men, attended the governmental in Beijing and non-governmental meetings in Hairou, which were held more or less at the same time. This twin-meeting on women was the largest conference ever held by the United Nations. I was one of two women from Grenada, tens of thousands from the rest of the world, five thousand from the U.S.A., and hundreds from Massachusetts. Many are here today because we too share the messages of Beijing.

At the end of the preparatory process of two years, and the conference itself, which took two weeks, much was accomplished: One, women's achievements over the first half of the century were noted: legal equality, access to education, and expanded work opportunities. Two, twelve major obstacles to women's well-being were identified. Three, these obstacles can be summarized as discrimination against women, grounded in cultural beliefs, in the structures and practices of society and in the sins of omission and commission of the state. Four, the meeting adopted a Declaration and a Plan of Action to serve as tools of education and strategic actions to improve women's lives and society.

If you ask me, I would say that putting the emphasis on making the lives of girls and women better, and in so doing, improving society, was among the most important messages of the meeting. *Consider: if a woman is not beaten in her home, she, her children and other members of the family can feel safer, may even flourish.* If women get into parliament in larger numbers, the culture of and legislation from parliament can change. When we looked at the record the world over, there was a second message: that the conditions and status of women and children in every society is in need of repair; all over the world and here in Massachusetts, women and children are the poorest, *those suffering most from domestic violence*, decisions affecting them are made by others.

Dessima Williams Ph.D. is a professor of Sociology at Brandeis University, Boston. This speech was presented to promote International Women's Day 1996

MASSACHUSETTS

BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTERS AND RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Alternative House

PO Box 2096
Highland Station
Lowell, MA 01851

Casa Myrne Vasquez

PO Box 18019
Boston, MA 02118

FINEX House

PO Box 1154
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Necessities/ Necesidades

16 Armory Street
Northampton, MA 01060

New Hope, Inc.

PO Box 4100
140 Park St.
Attleboro, MA 02703

Respond Inc.

PO Box 555
Somerville, MA 02143

Women's Service Center

146 First Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Womansplace Crisis Center

PO Box 4206
Brockton, MA 02403

Women's Resource Center

PO Box 2503
Fitchburg, MA 01420

YWCA Arch Program

PO Box 80632
Springfield, MA 01138

HAWC

27 Congress Street
Salem, MA 01970

Tracy Wadsworth

Executive Director
Caucus of Women
Legislators
State House, Room 156
Boston, MA 02133

YWCA Daybreak Resources for Women & Children

PO Box 3093
Worcester, MA 01613-3093

New Bedford Women's Center

Battered Women's Project
252 County Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Our Sister's Place

PO Box 4236
Fall River, MA 02723

Services Against Family Violence

Box 164
Malden, MA 02148

Transition House

PO Box 530
Harvard Square Station
Cambridge, MA 02138

Women's Crisis Center of Newburyport

9 Prince Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

Support Committee for Battered Women

PO Box 24
Waltham, MA 02254

DOVE

Box 287
Quincy, MA 02269

MA Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups

14 Beacon Street #507
Boston, MA 02108

Elizabeth Stone House

PO Box 15
Jamaica Plain, MA
02130

Harbor Me, Inc.

PO Box 191
Chelsea, MA 02150

New England Learning Center for Women

10 Park Street
Greenfield, MA 01301

Renewal House

PO Box 919,
Roxbury Crossing
Roxbury, MA 02120

South Shore Women's Center

225 Water St.
#412
Plymouth, MA 02360

Womanshelter Companeras

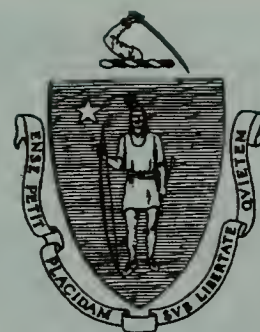
PO Box 6099
Holyoke, MA 01041

Women's Resource Center

454 North Canal Street
Lawrence, MA 01842

Women's Support Services

PO Box 369
Vineyard Haven, MA
02568



Executive Office of Public Safety

Programs Division
100 Cambridge Street, Room 2100
Boston, MA 02202

WILLIAM F. WELD
Governor

ARGEO PAUL CELLUCCI
Lt. Governor

KATHLEEN M. O'TOOLE
Secretary of Public Safety

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FORUM is a periodical of the Executive Office of Public Safety, Programs Division, published in collaboration with the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence.

Its purpose is to provide a forum for discussion and serve as a clearinghouse for information on the issues addressing the declared public emergency of domestic violence. We welcome your comments and story contributions to **FORUM**.

The views and opinions expressed in FORUM are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

SPREAD THE WORD!!!

New Nationwide Toll-Free Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

The new hotline was funded through the Violence Against Women Act. The TDD number for hearing impaired is 1-800-787-3224. Operators are available to help callers in English, Spanish and other languages. The hotline is accessible to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands

FORUM

Executive Office of Public Safety
Programs Division
100 Cambridge Street, Room 2100
Boston, Massachusetts 02202

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GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

DEC 29 1997

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COMMENTARY

Domestic Violence: A Challenge for Health Care

by John A. Foley, M.D.

A 1991 study by the American Medical Association (A.M.A.) revealed that 85% of Americans felt that they could disclose to their doctor that they were either the victim or perpetrator of family violence. This percentage was higher than those believing they could report to either the police or clergy! Based on that survey, in 1992 the A.M.A. set the standard that all physicians should ask their patients about domestic abuse. Why, then, is it that fewer than 5% of practicing physicians actually ask? Is it that doctors don't care? I would answer a resounding "no!"

The general lack of physician compliance with this protocol is multifactorial. The explanations are similar to the reasons other systems, such as police, courts, and government, have been slow to address the needs of victims of abuse. First, until recently, scientific studies which gave the medical community an accurate picture of the true incidence and prevalence of domestic abuse have been lacking. ("Incidents" refers to the number of people currently affected. Lifetime "prevalence" represents the percentage of individuals affected over a lifetime.) Second, training in the dynamics of the abusive relationship, and in the proper way for the health care provider to intervene successfully, has been completely absent. Third, the health care worker's fear of insulting the patient by asking, or worse yet, of getting a "positive" response to the question scares many doctors into letting "sleeping dogs lie." Time constraints on physicians are getting worse and therefore add to the physician's reluctance to ask about abuse.

The true incidence and prevalence of domestic violence have, until recently, been elusive numbers. In the June 14, 1995 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Abbot et al. reported that approximately 12% of females presenting to the emergency room are there that day because of an incident of abuse. They went on to quote a 54% lifetime prevalence of domestic violence exposure among female patients. In their comments section, the authors stated that the study might have overestimated the actual incidence figures. On the contrary, in my opinion, the study was likely to have underestimated incidence for at least two significant reasons.

First, only 78% of eligible patients were enrolled in the study. Four percent of the women were missed by the staff, and 11% refused to participate. The remaining 7% either left without being treated, did not speak English or Spanish, or were unable to respond because of critical illness or altered mental status. Second, continued physical violence and threats lead to a dramatic increase in the illnesses associated with chronic stress and anxiety. Thus, headaches, fatigue, atypical chest pain, irritable bowel syndrome, and generalized anxiety disorder are just a few of the many varied diagnoses which result from months and sometimes years of physical and emotional abuse. In other words, when the study asked if the patient was

"...continued physical violence and threats lead to a dramatic increase in the illnesses associated with chronic stress and anxiety. Thus, headaches, fatigue, atypical chest pain,... are just a few of the many varied diagnoses which result from months and sometimes years of physical and emotional abuse."

in the emergency department that day because of domestic abuse it is no wonder that some patients were not able to make the association.

A more recent study by deLahunta et al. in the June 26, 1996 issue of JAMA reported the results of a study of incidence and prevalence of domestic violence among students and faculty at the University of Rochester Medical School. The study reported a lifetime prevalence of domestic abuse of 40% among the female faculty and medical students. Surprisingly they reported a 15% lifetime prevalence of abuse among the male students and faculty. This is a much higher estimate of prevalence for males and might reflect the inclusion of childhood abuse as part of "lifetime" risk for violence. This study also had key flaws that served to grossly underestimate the prevalence of violence against women.

First, 20% of the respondents admitted to an argument involving hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping or kicking. These responses were excluded from entry into the study. Second, 12% of the respondents admitted that a partner had thrown something at them, and again, these responses were not entered into the study's reported prevalence rates. Finally, and I believe most important, there was no attempt made to evaluate emotional abuse as a form of domestic violence. To those experts in the field of domestic violence, this is a major oversight. Batterers will boast that "One good punch can last a lifetime." Physical violence is merely one tool the abuser uses to exert power and control. Battered victims are often more profoundly affected by the emotional and psychological isolation and abuse than they are from the physical assault!

Every medical student experiences the agony of learning the art of taking a patient history and performing a thorough physical exam. The first time student doctors take a detailed sexual history from a patient, they are uncomfortable and awkward. It is necessary, however, to overcome those initial feelings of embarrassment, and at times fear, and perfect the skill. Making the correct diagnosis requires that physicians ask the right questions. The A.M.A.'s recommendation that physicians ask all female patients about domestic abuse was a great first step (1). It is also critical to note that abuse occurs within gay and lesbian relationships, and health care providers are often in a unique position to discuss issues of such a sensitive nature. If, however, physicians are not trained in the proper way to ask the question, and given the tools to deal with the patient's response, we will continue to see low physician involvement.

Historically, police and courts were criticized for their failure to adequately respond to the needs of victims of domestic violence. This failure, similar to that seen in the health care community, reflects a lack of proper training and understanding of the extent and the complexity of the problem. In Massachusetts, we've seen an improved response by police

“
... in 1992 the
A.M.A. set the
standard that all
physicians should ask
their patients about
domestic abuse.
”

and the courts to victims of abuse, which can be directly attributed to recent training of police and court personnel. In the case of physicians, exposure to the dynamics of abuse must occur early in their medical training so that asking questions about domestic violence becomes as routine and comfortable as asking questions about sexual behavior and use of illicit drugs. For physicians currently in practice, continuing education programs are a great opportunity to discuss family violence and teach the

doctor or nurse an effective strategy for identifying victims of abuse and getting them the appropriate help.

Fear that the physician will "own" the problem also leads well-intentioned doctors to avoid asking the question. There is a sentiment among most doctors (and I am no exception) that saving or curing the patient is the ultimate goal. Realizing that the victims of domestic violence are not looking to be "saved," should obviate the anxiety we feel. Unlike the patient with the urinary tract infection that can be cured with antibiotics, the complexity of domestic violence does not lend itself to a quick fix.

Asking the question opens the lines of communication between the doctor and patient. Asking the question tells the patient that their problem is important and worthy of our time as busy doctors. Asking the question will likely lead to your patient's denying the problem. However, once the door has been opened, the patient is more likely to walk through it the next time. You may never see that patient again. It may be another doctor, in another hospital and in another state to whom the patient goes when she is ready and able to leave. YOU have started the momentum, you have shown you care, and you have told your patient that doctors are a great place to turn when in trouble. Yes, by asking every female patient about abuse you have opened the door. It is our responsibility as physicians everywhere to keep that door open.

John A. Foley, M.D. is a Cardiology Fellow, University of Massachusetts Medical Center. He is also an Instructor of Medicine, University of Massachusetts Medical School, and Associate Faculty, Graduate School of Nursing, University of Massachusetts. Dr. Foley is married to Marie Kenny, Executive Director of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. They have been conducting joint domestic violence collaborative programs for medical and law enforcement professionals since 1992.

1 American Medical Association Diagnostic and Treatment Guidelines on Domestic Violence. AMA Chicago, Ill. 1992

Framingham Police Department

by Lieutenant Steven Carl

The Framingham Police Department is taking a leadership role in their community in an effort to combat domestic violence. Chief Brent Larrabee is sensitive to not only the plight of abuse victims and their families, but also the frustration that domestic violence calls place on investigating officers. He has assigned Lieutenants Steven Carl and Edward Yarosz the task of developing an organizational strategy. One objective of the new strategy is the victimless prosecution of domestic violence cases. Like many police departments, Framingham has experienced numerous cases of being "Nolle Prose" due to failure of the victim to testify. Questioning why homicide cases could be successfully prosecuted without victim testimony, yet domestic cases were being "Nolle Prose" due to lack of victim/witness testimony, Lieutenants Yarosz and Carl decided to apply the same investigative standards to domestic violence cases as used in homicide investigations.

Central, Specialized Unit

The department's approach to domestic violence was generally a patrol division response. Although the department has a mandatory arrest policy, officers were sometimes overwhelmed with calls allowing little if no follow-up investigation. It was determined to properly investigate domestic violence in Framingham, a centralized Domestic Violence Unit had to be formed. The unit became operational as of November 1, 1996, and consists of three investigators and a victim advocate.

The Domestic Violence Unit will take a holistic approach to domestic violence and related issues. The focus of the unit is prevention, intervention, and enforcement. It is expected that in February 1997, the Domestic Violence Unit will merge with the Youth Services Division, creating the Family Protection Bureau. This Bureau will be comprised of the following personnel: a lieutenant/commander, two domestic violence investigators, violence prevention and resolution officer, two D.A.R.E. officers, youth service officer, victim advocate and a family intervention clinician.

A key component to the success of this unit is community awareness of domestic violence as a serious crime. Using a proven technique of communication, a media blitz was adopted. To assure the campaign was successful, the department solicited the assistance of two local advertising experts. Lois Catanzaro of Ackerley Outdoor Advertising provided prominent billboard space at no cost. Sergio Bento, owner of FastSigns of Framingham offered his graphic art department to assist in developing how the department's message should be publicized for maximum visibility and

impact. A five step approach was developed to deliver the department's message:

"DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A CRIME, IN FRAMINGHAM YOU WILL BE ARRESTED"



Detail of Domestic Violence Billboard, on display in Framingham

1. Billboard in downtown Framingham at

intersection of two state highways.

2. Signs posted on all major routes entering Framingham.

3. Newspaper article featuring the billboard, street signs, and newly formed domestic violence unit.

4. Cable television programming and spot announcements focusing on the department's message.

5. Bumper stickers, promoting our message to enhance public awareness of domestic violence.

By using a comprehensive approach toward domestic violence, the Framingham Police endeavor to:

Protect the victim; stop the aggression; aggressively prepare cases for prosecution, thereby holding the batterer accountable; and assist the victims and their families in obtaining help through social service agencies.

In Framingham, the Police Department is sending a powerful message: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE is a CRIME.

Lt. Steve Carl has been a police officer in Framingham since 1983. He is currently Commander of the Bureau of Community Services and works extensively on community policing and domestic violence programs.

Jane Doe Walk for Women's Safety

October 12, 1996

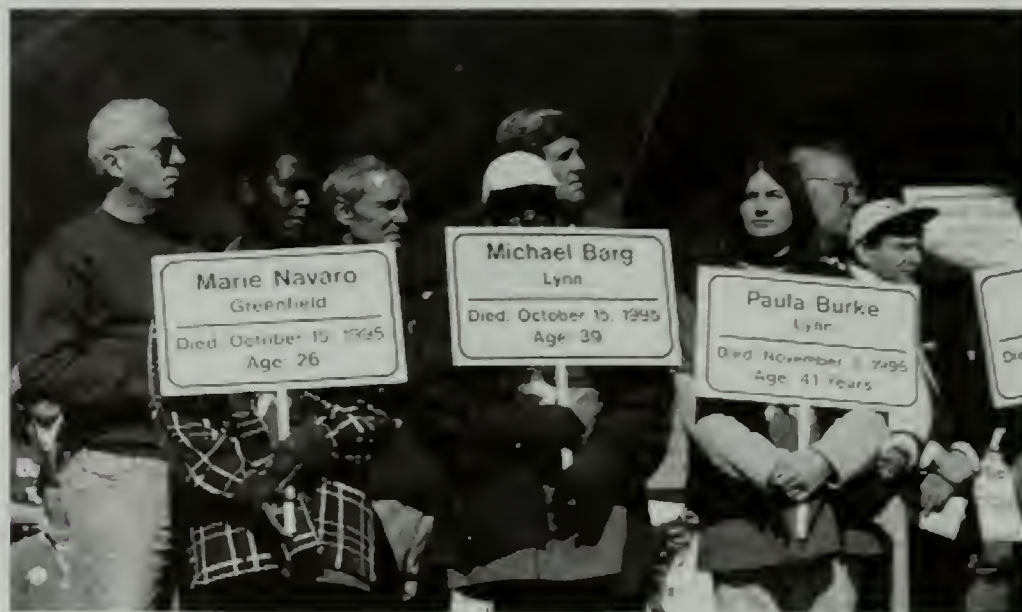
In 1991, the Jane Doe Safety Fund was born, during a period of economic downturn affecting programs providing services for victims of domestic violence throughout Massachusetts. Carolyn Ramsey, the former Executive Director of the Massachusetts Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups, a survivor of domestic violence, created the Fund with an innovative public awareness and fund-raising initiative to highlight the issue of domestic violence. The Jane Doe Safety Fund is based upon the premise that "Jane Doe" describes the thousands of anonymous battered women who are our sisters, mothers, daughters, co-workers, neighbors, employees and friends.

Over the past five years, the Jane Doe Safety Fund has experienced an unparalleled success. With the support of major Massachusetts businesses, the media, and the public, over \$710,000 has been distributed to the Coalition's member programs through various fund-raising initiatives, the premier of which is the annual Walk for Women's Safety.

The 1996 Walk was held on Saturday, October 12, 1996, and 3,500 walkers participated. Celebrities who spoke were: Senator John Kerry; Boston Mayor Thomas Menino; Middlesex County District Attorney Thomas F. Reilly; Norfolk County District Attorney William D. Delahunt; Senator Lois Pines; Representative David Cohen; Newton Mayor Thomas Concannon; Ms. Liz Walker; and Ms. Marjorie Clapgood.

To date, monies raised from the Walk through pledges from corporations and individuals is \$150,000.

For more information on the Jane Doe Safety Fund, telephone (617) 248-0922.



UPDATE

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEES ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Transition Subcommittee

The Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children working group continues to work with the MacCormick Institute Center for Social Policy Research to analyze the results of a survey to identify the incidence of domestic violence within the TRAFDC population. Based on the results of the survey, the working group will be making recommendations regarding the implementation of certain elements of welfare reforms to the full Commission.

Each recommendation contained in the Children of Domestic Violence paper and endorsed by the Commission has been assigned a lead subcommittee and a lead state agency to design the implementation of the recommendation.

The Transition Subcommittee will soon be recommending, to the full Commission, Visitation Center Guidelines for use with cases where families have experienced domestic violence.

The Affordable Housing Subcommittee is embarking on statewide trainings on domestic violence to local housing authorities and the regional nonprofit housing agencies. The group continues to review the Department of Housing and Community Development regulations and policies as they affect victims of domestic violence and to highlight model housing projects that incorporate the needs of victims of domestic violence.

Uniform Enforcement Subcommittee

The subcommittee, chaired by District Attorney Tom Reilly, has been meeting regularly to tackle several projects. The subcommittee has been working on revising the 1994 Uniform Enforcement Standards for Police and Prosecutors. They are scheduled to be presented to the full Commission in December for endorsement. Those standards will then be distributed statewide in early 1997. A follow up study on implementation of the standards by police and prosecutors will be conducted. The Uniform Enforcement Subcommittee is also in the process of submitting proposed changes for the Executive Office of Public Safety Guidelines for Police. The subcommittee will undertake the task of compiling a Resource Manual of all the standards endorsed by the Commission.

Community Education Subcommittee

The Subcommittee on Community Education has formed three major subgroups this year, each with a number of working groups. These subgroups are: Community Awareness, Teen Dating Violence, and Child Witness to Violence.

The Community Awareness Subgroup has had two major working groups - the Family Violence Prevention Brochure and the Public Awareness Campaign. The Family Violence Prevention Brochure has been developed and approved by the Commission and the subcommittee will bring recommendations in January for distribution of the brochure to places where battered mothers can access it - police officers, courts, hospitals, schools, churches/community centers, and social service agencies. The Public Awareness Campaign Working Group, with the help of Hill, Holliday Advertising, is developing a large-scale campaign to be implemented next year which seeks to "promote change in attitude and a new language around domestic violence." The thrust of the campaign is to prevent, not just intervene with domestic violence.

The Teen-Dating Violence Subgroup has two major working groups - the Model Restraining Order and School Policies and Procedures group and the Parent Involvement group. The Model Restraining Order group is working on a package for school leaders on how to implement teen restraining orders and deal with other issues relating to teen-dating violence in schools, as well as providing model restraining orders and safety plans which
(continued on p. 6)

Events and Publications

Catastrophic Injuries and Motor Vehicle Homicides Collaborative Training for Victim Witness Advocates

December 12-13, 1996

**Co-Sponsored by District Attorney Victim Witness Directors
and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance**

Annual Victims Rights Conference Thursday, April 17, 1997

State House

Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance

New England Victim Services Training Conference

**November 19-21
1997**

**Westford Regency Hotel
Westford MA**

Attorney General's Victim's Brochure

In an effort to assist victims of domestic violence in obtaining needed protection, the Attorney General's Office has published a brochure, Answers to Common Legal Questions and Resources for Victims of Domestic Violence. This brochure is available in seven languages in addition to English: Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Haitian, Kmer, Vietnamese and Chinese.

To obtain copies of the brochure, please call the Attorney General's Office, Family and Community Crimes Bureau at (617) 727-2200, extension 2553.

Commission Subcommittees (cont'd from p. 5)

reflect the reality of teen life. The hope is that this information can also be used to help guide courts and others in developing plans for teens. The Parent Involvement group is looking at what parents need to know to protect their children from dating violence and from the effects of witnessing dating violence. This group will identify what information and training is already available to parents and promote the distribution and development of more material. The Teen -Dating violence subgroup also continues to act as an advisory body for the Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention Grant to school districts begun in 1996. The 31 sites from year one will focus on implementing adolescent perpetrators intervention and victim support groups in year two, as well as developing peer leadership programs. Five to ten new sites are in the process of being identified.

The Child Witness to Violence Subgroup has recently been convened to advance eight of the recommendations outlined in the "Children of Domestic Violence Report" developed by the Children's Working Group of the Transition subcommittee. These recommendations focus on ensuring the safety and identification of child witnesses within the school setting, supporting violence prevention programming within schools and communities and expanding existing anti-violence programming to include domestic violence, and supporting parenting skills programs for new parents and caretakers on the effects of domestic violence on children.

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Its purpose is to provide a forum for discussion and serve as a clearinghouse for information on the issues addressing the declared public emergency of domestic violence. We welcome your comments and story contributions to **FORUM**.

The views and opinions expressed in FORUM are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

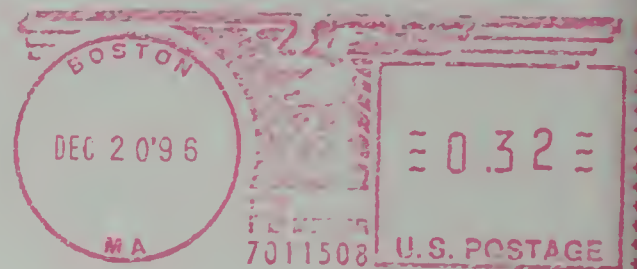
S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act (V.A.W.A.) Grants

On August 9, 1996 the Department of Justice, Violence Against Women Act Grants Office awarded the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety \$2.6 million for the 1996 Massachusetts S.T.O.P. VAWA Program.

Applications for victim, law enforcement and prosecution program proposals were issued on September 18, 1996. The grant application deadline was November 22, 1996; Grant awards are expected to be made in February 1997.

FORUM

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